



February 2006

The Bay Leaf

California Native Plant Society • East Bay Chapter • Alameda & Contra Costa Counties
www.ebcnps.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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Fridays, February 3, 10, 17, 24, Native Here Nursery open 9 am to noon
Saturdays, February 4, 11, 18, 15, nursery open 10 am to 1 pm

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French broom removal at the Skyline Gate Staging Area in the Oakland hills

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Saturday, February 4, 10:00 am, **Joaquin Miller Park, Oakland**
Sunday, February 12, 9:30 am, **Mount Diablo State Park**

San Francisco Garden Show at the Cow Palace, Wednesday, March 15 through Sunday, March 19, East Bay CNPS will have a booth. See page 4.

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Creation of a Sierra Nevada Field Guide

Speaker: **Jack Laws**

Wednesday, February 22, 2006, 7:30 pm

Garden Room, Orinda Public Library (directions below)

Naturalist and artist John (Jack) Muir Laws is creating an illustrated field guide to more than 1,200 species of plants and animals of the Sierra Nevada. This comprehensive and easy to use guide will allow botanists to identify the insects that come to their flowers, birders to identify the trees in which the birds perch, and hikers to identify the stars overhead at night.

Jack will present an illustrated lecture about the natural history of the Sierra Nevada and the creation of a field guide, including a live demonstration of his amazing artistic process. He will also bring original illustrations that have been painted in the field and studio.

Jack is a wildlife biologist and an associate of the California Academy of Sciences. He has studied the natural history of the Sierra for many years and spent the last four summers painting Sierra wildflowers from life. During the 2005 wildflower season alone, Jack spent more than 70 days in the field working on illustrations

for this book. His illustrations capture the feeling of the living plant or animal, while also including details critical for identification.

In the summer of 2004, Jack published *Sierra Birds: A Hiker's Guide*. He is also a regular contributor to *Bay Nature* magazine with his "Naturalist's Notebook" column.

East Bay CNPS membership meetings are free of charge and open to everyone. This month's meeting will take place in the Garden Room of the Orinda Public Library at 24 Orinda Way (in Orinda Village). The Garden Room is on the second floor of the building, accessible by stairs or an elevator. The Garden Room will open at 7:00 pm. The meeting begins at 7:30 pm. Refreshments will be served after the presentation. Please contact Sue Rosenthal, 510-496-6016 or rosacalifornica@earthlink.net, if you have any questions.

Directions to Orinda Public Library at 24 Orinda Way:

From the west, take Highway 24 to the Orinda/Moraga exit. At the end of the off-ramp, turn left on Camino Pablo (toward Orinda Village), right on Santa Maria Way (the signal after the BART station and freeway entrance), and left on Orinda Way.

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From the east, take Highway 24 to the Orinda exit. Follow the ramp to Orinda Village. Turn right on Santa Maria Way (the first signal) and left on Orinda Way.

Once on Orinda Way, go 1 short block to the parking lot on the southeast side of the new 2-story building on your right. There is additional free parking beneath the building as well as on the street.

From BART (4 blocks): Exit the Orinda station, turn right and cross a pedestrian bridge, then cross a sec-

ond pedestrian bridge on the left. Go one short block on the sidewalk to the third pedestrian bridge. Go two blocks on Orinda Way to the Orinda Library.

Next month's meeting:

March 22, 7:30 pm, Orinda Library Auditorium

Speaker: Bart O'Brien, co-author of the wonderful new Cachuma Press book *California Native Plants for the Garden* and director of horticulture at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden

A VICTORY FOR CONSERVATION

Teamwork to Protect Sibley Preserve Pays Off

"Congratulations! ... a stunning accomplishment." These were the words of Brad Jenkins, CNPS' new President of the State Board of Directors, in hailing a recent major conservation victory for the East Bay Chapter. Over the past year representatives from CNPS and other conservation organizations labored hard to persuade the East Bay Regional Parks District to eliminate an ill-advised group campground from the proposed Land Use Plan Amendment/Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Sibley Preserve. That effort culminated in a landmark decision 4-3 by the Parks' Board of Directors to drop the campground from the LUPA when a score of concerned individuals showed up at the board meeting to plead their case. The LUPA called for a 150-person campground to be built in the previously land banked area, raising two major issues.

First, conservationists argued that building large campgrounds and other major infrastructures in designated preserves is forbidden by the Master Plan because of the high level of impact on a small protected area (Sibley is approximately 660 acres). Second, Sibley is the last funnel piece into the Caldecott Wildlife Corridor, a thin strip of land connecting the southern and northern reaches of the East Bay Hills across the Caldecott Tunnel. The CWC was the subject of a long-term resource management plan which called for increased protection of the corridor because it provides an important route for plant dispersal and wildlife movement. Although the Park District had participated in the plan, its proposal to develop the campground was regarded unequivocally by CNPS, Golden Gate Audubon, the Sierra Club, and the Regional Parks Association as a serious threat to the corridor. Sibley and its immediate environs contain dozens of significant, sensitive, rare or locally rare native plant species as well as plant communities that support critical habitat for wildlife species of concern. In addition, the corridor is the only place where top predators such as mountain lions,

coyotes, and gray fox may move from one region to the next without having to cross a major freeway.

Park Board Director John Sutter, in whose ward Sibley lies, said that the public hearing convinced him that, should the Park District proceed to build the campground in the corridor, it would have a difficult time defending its decision in the future. Joining Sutter in turning down the campground were Directors Jean Siri, Ted Radke, and Ayn Wieskamp. CNPS encourages you to write a note to them to thank them for the wisdom of this decision. Their e-mail addresses can be found on the East Bay Regional Parks District website (ebparks.org).

Conservation Analyst Fund

If you are pleased with the kind of success that the Sibley decision represents for the chapter's conservation program, please consider donating to the Conservation Analyst's fund, which supports a half-time position that enables CNPS to have representation at the table for all major issues that threaten our local native flora. Send checks to California Native Plant Society 2707 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816-5113 with EB Chapter Conservation Analyst noted.

Laura Baker

We should preserve every scrap of biodiversity as priceless while we learn to use it and come to understand what it means to humanity.

E.O. Wilson, The Diversity of Life

We shall never achieve harmony with land, any more than we shall achieve absolute justice or liberty for people. In these higher aspirations, the important thing is not to achieve but to strive.

Aldo Leopold

NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

January 18, 2006

Dear CNPS staff and members,

Our new executive director, Amanda Jorgenson, officially started work yesterday, Tuesday January 17th. She joins us with a history of work in conservation, natural resource management and organization management. Most of this work has been with non-profit organizations.

Amanda started her career with a BS in Biology from George Mason University and an MA in Latin American Studies, Tropical Conservation and Development from the University of Florida (Gainesville).

A progression of jobs in the U.S. and Latin America led to her most recent position as Country Program Coordinator for the Wildlife Conservation Society in Ecuador. She supervised and coordinated the design and implementation of activities to promote research and conservation of biological diversity at the landscape scale. To fully understand the work performed there, talk to her about the diverse groups she brought together for successful projects.

Somewhere along the way, Amanda had time to compile a list of reports and publications to her credit as well.

Amanda lives in the Sacramento area and will be in the office most weekdays during normal working hours. Please feel free to introduce yourself in person, by phone or email (ajorgenson@cnps.org).

Sincerely,
Brad Jenkins
Board of Directors President
California Native Plant Society

SPRING GARDEN TOUR

Mini plant sales on May 7 - helpers needed

Our chapter will host five mini plant sales at the 2006 Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour. We will also sell books, posters, t-shirts, raffle tickets and offer CNPS memberships and brochures.

The CNPS garden mini-sales will be in Richmond, El Cerrito, Berkeley, Walnut Creek and Martinez. There will be almost 60 gardens on the tour (please see the website www.bringingbackthenatives.net). Last year, several of the gardens had 900 visitors during the day.

We will need helpers who will be on hand to tell people about the plants and our organization, and also cashiers.

If you are interested in helping out with this short term project, please contact me. Shifts will be about 2 -3 hours long, depending on how many helpers volunteer. Volunteers will be eligible for a free raffle to win a garden design consultation.

Delia Taylor
510-527-3912
deliataylor@mac.com

NATIVE PLANT RESTORATION TEAM

February work party, Saturday, February 4, 9:30 am-1:00 pm

French broom removal at the Skyline Gate Staging Area in the Oakland hills

French broom is easily one of the most commonly found invasive plants in the Oakland Hills. Already prevalent before the Oakland Hills fire, it exploded over the newly cleared land left by the tragedy. It is a major problem throughout the East Bay Hills and, given the budgetary constraints facing cities and park districts all over California, not much is being done about it.

Broom propagates quickly and forms a mono-culture, choking out native plants. It is also highly combustible and adds to the fire danger in the Hills.

What can one person do about this situation? Let's take a cue from one CNPS member who was so fed up with seeing French broom along her favorite dog walks that she simply started pulling the plant on her own. One day another dog walker passed by and was bewildered at what she was doing . . . and joined her in the effort!

A request to our restoration team for help led to a work party that was so successful that a monthly effort (taking place the 1st Saturday of every month) evolved that continues to this day. Great swaths of land have been cleared - the transformation of this area has been dramatic.

The park staff, who are now totally on board with the effort, are thrilled with the results.

This kind of evolution from one person's small step to an ongoing stewardship group is a great model for others to follow. We should do all we can to encourage this kind of effort, so please attend our first work party

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RESTORATION TEAM

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of 2006 and see for yourself what one person can do. Please join us February 4. We'll be meeting at the Skyline Gate Staging Area parking lot at 9:30 am. It is a bit of a walk to the work site, so arriving on time is important.

Please bring your own gloves. Weed wrenches and other tools (as well as snacks) will be provided.

Directions: Take Highway 13 to the Park Boulevard Exit. Go east to the first intersection, Mountain Boulevard. Go left onto Mountain a short distance to Snake Road, right on Snake (uphill) straight through onto Shepard's Canyon. Take Shepard's Canyon all the way to Skyline Boulevard. Go right on Skyline Boulevard a short distance to the Skyline Gate Staging Area. Skyline is the next major staging area/parking lot beyond Sibley and Huckleberry Preserves going southeast.

Rain cancels. Call 510-684 2473 or email californica@mac.com to confirm the morning of the event if rain seems likely.

And coming March 18th

Don your rubber boots and yellow rain gear (provided, of course). We're heading out to the Richmond Field Station to team up with the Watershed Project Saturday, March 18th to help with their efforts to preserve and restore the last remaining Coastal Terrace Prairie of its kind in the world.

For those who like to add new life as part of their restoration activities, planting beautiful specimens from the Project's nursery will also be part of the event.

We'll be gathering under wide-open skies with commanding waterfront views of the San Francisco Bay. Come get muddy with us in what promises to be a unique and memorable day on the Bay!

Greg Wolford

SF GARDEN SHOW

EBCNPS is going to have a booth at the 2006 San Francisco Garden show at the Cow Palace Wednesday, March 15 through Sunday, March 19. Last year and in previous years we have had tremendous success with our booth with recruiting new members, myth-busting native plant misinformation, and educational outreach. Our table is located in an area of other environmental/educational groups so we are in good company. It is a wonderful opportunity to participate in the Society's goal of community outreach as well as attending the rest of the show for free. (Admittance is somewhere between \$20 and \$25.) We would need volunteers for each day

to work in 2-3 hour shifts (or more). The job is easy: answer questions and hand out literature, sell books and posters (or take the opportunity to expand your own library), sign up new members, chat with neighbors many of whom you may already know. Call or email me for volunteer slots and any other information I can give you. We'll be working with other CNPS chapters and it certainly would afford an opportunity to meet members you might otherwise never bump into.

George McRae
510-233-7374
Elegans@aol.com

FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, February 4, 10:00 am, Joaquin Miller Park, Oakland

Join Chris Thayer in exploring the upper portion of Joaquin Miller Park for mushrooms and other fungi, along with a number of locally uncommon vascular plants that can be seen in early spring. This trip does not assume any previous knowledge of mushrooms. You can expect introductions to several different species, plus some field guidelines for mushroom/fungus keys, as opposed to more familiar plant keys. Duration of the trip will depend on the group, but we will always be within a short walk back to the parking lot. Only torrential rains cancel.

Directions: From Highway 13 (either north or south), take the Joaquin Miller Road exit and proceed uphill, all the way to the stoplight at Skyline Boulevard. Turn left at the stop light and follow winding Skyline Boulevard to the signs for Sequoia Arena. Turn left and park at the end of the Sequoia Arena parking lot, where the field trip will start. Do not park in the lot for Chabot Space & Science Center, which is limited to Planetarium visitors.

Sunday, February 12, 9:30 am, Mount Diablo State Park

Gregg Weber will return to the canyons above Clayton to see many midwinter flowers, which the latest rains have encouraged, and with possible performances by sun, sky and clouds. This is a strenuous walk with 2300 feet elevation gain on the way out, and all downhill on the return trip. The round trip distance is about 8 miles, so the trip will take 4-6 hours. Bring lunch and water, and be prepared for a wide range of temperatures. Winter blooms to look for should include two species of manzanita, violas, nemophila, and some early composites in flower.

Directions: Take 24 or 680 to Ignacio Valley Road. Continue on Ignacio Valley Road into the city of Clayton, where you turn right onto Clayton Road. Take Clayton

Road past the first intersection with Marsh Creek Road; in about a mile, it becomes Marsh Creek Road. Continue straight on Marsh Creek Road and turn right on Regency Drive. Go three blocks on Regency Drive, turn left on Rialto Drive, and go to the end of Rialto Drive, park, and meet the group.

Janet Gauthrop

NATIVE HERE

Fridays, February 3, 10, 17, 24, Native Here Nursery open 9 am to noon

Saturdays, February 4, 11, 18, 15, nursery open 10 am to 1 pm

Thanks to Gregg Weber who made a point of collecting seeds of various annuals, we will have six packs of a number of annual species ready to plant out in January. Prices vary according to the number of individuals in the packs (from \$3 to \$10 per six pack). Bulbs and herbaceous perennials are emerging, so January is a great time to buy them, too.

Our climate makes winter an excellent time to plant natives. For those of us lazy about watering, nature takes over the job most of the time. The ground is soft enough to dig, even in clay soils.

Shrubs, trees and grasses are also available and ready to go in the ground.

Volunteers are always welcome to join in the fun. Botanical and horticultural expertise are **not** required. "Can you use a hammer?" is a relevant qualifying question for new volunteers. No need to phone ahead, just show up ready to work! The nursery is at 101 Golf Course Drive in Tilden Park across from the main entrance to the golf course. Phone is 510-549-0211. Heavy rain or high winds close the nursery.

Last month's account of noted Native Here volunteers missed one of the most important—Janice Bray. Janice not only volunteers on Fridays, she is the mid-week waterer. She also is an active seed collector and avid photographer. The photos and interpretive material in the nursery are her project. Much of her work is behind the scenes, but the nursery couldn't function without her valuable volunteer effort.

Charli Danielsen

He who knows what sweets and virtues are in the ground, the waters, the plants, the heavens, and how to come at these enchantments, is the rich and royal man.

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), *Essays, Second Series*, 1844

ACTIVITIES OF OTHERS

Saturday February 18, 9:00 am-noon.

Join a volunteer work party sponsored by the Watershed Project to restore a rare coastal terrace prairie at the University of California's Richmond Field Station. This grassland is one of the last remaining ecosystems of its kind with a number of locally significant species. We will be planting a diversity of grasses and forbs, and this is a wonderful opportunity to get to know some of these species and learn more about the restoration efforts.

Everyone is welcome, pre-registration is greatly appreciated but not necessary. Youth under 18 will need signed permission from a parent or guardian. Tools, gloves, boots, and light refreshments are provided, and if it's wet we have rain suits for all! Damp weather is great for planting, but stormy conditions will cancel the activity. You may get muddy, so dress appropriately.

To register and receive directions or for more information, email Bayshorestewards@thewatershedproject.org, call 510-665-3689, or visit www.thewatershedproject.org

Location: The Watershed Project, 1327 South 46th Street, Richmond Field Station #155, Richmond. Take Carlson Boulevard west from I-80, turn left on Bayview Avenue then left on 47th.

*Martha Berthelsen, Public Programs Coordinator
The Watershed Project*

3rd Annual Bay-Friendly Garden Tour

Sunday, April 30 2006 - 10am to 4pm
Showcasing Natural Gardening Techniques

Visit a wide assortment of Bay-Friendly Gardens on this **free**, self-guided tour. Thirty-five public and private gardens will be featured throughout Alameda County. Several of the clusters are walkable and/or bikeable.

This year's tour celebrates the diverse styles of Bay-Friendly gardens. A Mediterranean inspired retreat behind olive, fig and pomegranate trees. A corner garden with rooms hedged in by drought tolerant plants from around the globe. A native plant hillside terraced under a lofty oak. An edible kitchen garden complete with hens and bees. This is just a taste of what you'll find throughout your day's exploration. For a sneak preview of the tour, visit www.BayFriendly.org.

Registration for the tour is required. Registrants will receive a tour guide book with garden directions and descriptions by mail. Native plants can be purchased at select sites on the tour.

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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|--|--|---|--|
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| | Conservation Conservation Committee Chair Charli Danielson 10 Kerr Ave. Kensington 94707 | | |

ACTIVITIES OF OTHERS continued from page 5

For more information or to register, please visit www.BayFriendly.org or call 510-444-SOIL. Volunteers are needed for the day of the tour. If interested, please contact Lawrence Grodeska at lgrodeska@stopwaste.org or 510-614-1699.

Volunteers Sought for Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour

The Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour is seeking volunteers who will spend a morning or afternoon greeting tour participants and answering questions at this native plant garden tour. More than 50 gardens located throughout Alameda and Contra Costa counties will be showcased on this tour, which will take place on Sunday, May 1, 2005. Volunteers can select the garden they would like to spend time at by visiting the "Preview the Gardens" section at www.BringingBackTheNatives.net.

Benefits to volunteers include a pre-tour meeting with the owner and private tour of the garden you will be staffing, a guaranteed tour reservation for the half day you are free, a Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour t-shirt, and, perhaps best of all, heartfelt thanks for helping to educate the general public about the many pleasures and benefits of gardening with California native plants. For more information, please e-mail Kathy Kramer at Kathy@KathyKramerConsulting.net, or call 510-236-9558 between 9 am and 9 pm.

Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

Zip _____ Telephone _____

I wish to affiliate with:

East Bay Chapter (Alameda and Contra Costa Counties) E-mail _____
 Other _____ (optional)

Membership category:

- Student, Retired, Limited income, \$20
- Individual, Library, \$35
- Household, Family, or Group, \$45
- Supporting, \$75
- Plant lover, \$100
- Patron, \$250
- Benefactor, \$500
- Mariposa Lily, \$1000

Mail application and check to: California Native Plant Society, 2707 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento CA 95816



Quercus chrysolepis (Canyon live oak) with red admiral butterfly (*Vanessa atalanta*). Photo by Janice Bray

**California Native Plant Society
East Bay Chapter
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